
Assessment of Services Rendered by a Public Organization to the Citizen: The Perspective of Security in Peacetime

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Abstract:

Purpose: This article discusses the possibilities and consequences of the Polish Armed Forces (which is a type of public organization) utilizing the concept of New Public Management (NPM). The key element of NPM focuses on the citizen – the customer of public services who assesses the quality of service and effects. The research aimed to evaluate the service understood as activities and the value that a citizen receives from the military units from the perspective of the need to ensure security in the time of peace.

Approach/Methodology/Design: Scientific literature and results from the research among 600 inhabitants from the Polish cities and other reports were analyzed. The article contains the results of own analyses, which were carried out based on data obtained in the research conducted using a mix-mode research procedure CATI (Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing) and CAWI (Computer-Assisted Web Interview).

Findings: To evaluate the service security offered by the armed forces, it is possible to use the Need-Feature-Benefit (NFB) principle, and its specification understood as a portfolio of implemented activities and values. The research results show that respondents who evaluated the values (like solidarity, justice, patriotism, love in human relations, conscientiousness, perseverance) higher also showed greater appreciation for the security service delivered by the armed forces.

Practical Implications: The results are of significant importance to a public organization. The applied research allowed creating an approach to evaluating the armed forces' service applying the Need-Feature-Benefit (NFB) principle for practical implications that could help not only in Poland but also worldwide.

Originality/Value: The research provides theoretical assumptions and practical answers to encourage further research globally.

Keywords: New Public Management, citizen, customer, public services, public goods.

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1. Introduction

The management of public organizations is the subject of many studies and discussions, especially because of the methods and techniques used in business organizations. Relocating the concept of corporate management to the public sector caused the development of a new trend in management – public management, whose definition boundaries are still subject to theoretical discourse (Lichtarski and Bąk-Grabowska, 2017). However, the development of the concept of public management, especially the New Public Management (NPM) direction, has propelled public organizations to include market mechanisms and management techniques in management. A particularly important element of NPM is focusing on the citizen – the customer of public services.

A citizen is identified with a service recipient whose satisfaction results from the highest standard of services provided by a public organization, regardless of its monopolistic assumption (Van Ryzin, Gregg, 2015; Marks-Krzyszowska, 2016). A public organization, characterized by a modern management structure, must provide high quality (Opolski and Modzelewski, 2004), so citizen-customer satisfaction is evidence of efficient public organization management and a criterion for evaluating its overall achievements. In the Polish environment, this approach was reflected in the document "Sprawne Państwo 2020 (Efficient State, 2020)", where we read: "A citizen is a customer of public institutions; a recipient of created legal regulations and information and communications of public institutions; a sender of applications, petitions or speeches addressed to public institutions; a partner, voter, co-decision maker in the processes of governance and management; a consumer and a patient who is provided with legal information, access to health services and safety; an employee, entrepreneur, etc." (<http://administracja.mswia.gov.pl/adm/departament-administra/strategia-sprawne-panst>).

One of the key public entities providing services for the citizen in the area of security is the Polish Armed Forces (PAF), which, while guarding the state's sovereignty, guarantees the inviolability of borders and territorial integrity. Their primary role is (Kitler, 2017):

- in the external perspective – preventing aggression, maintaining peace, and guaranteeing the power of the state,
- from an internal perspective – protecting internal order, helping civil authorities and society in the event of natural or man-made disasters.

The Polish Armed Forces is a public institution in the strict sense, offering standard public goods and, at the same time, "the source of financing is public funds, and the root of power is the public ownership of resources and the political mandate of a group having public power" (Bednarczyk, 2001). The Polish Armed Forces being responsible for providing the society with the public good, which is national defense, contributes to creating links between the military, the public, state institutions, non-

governmental organizations, and social partners. It is worth emphasizing that the approach to security issues, of which national defense is a component, assumes an increase in society's involvement and responsibility for shaping its foundations. Community care for the implementation of social and economic objectives, including the assurance of security, is conditioned by the complexity, dynamics, and difficulty to predict the course of phenomena in the environment (Stachowiak, 2010; Gierszewski *et al.*, 2020; Siemiątkowski *et al.*, 2020) and manifests itself also in the allocation of financial resources for public purposes. As a result of the allocation, public goods are produced, the consumption of which is an expression of social inclusion (Brol, 2010) and is in the point of interest of the whole society.

The Polish Armed Forces, like other public organizations in the last twenty years, are subject to strong changes resulting from the dynamics of the global situation: political, economic, social, and cultural. During this period, the experience of the Polish army is vibrant from a strategic perspective as, having joined Western security structures, it has been building up an increasingly higher position in NATO and the EU, corresponding to Polish interests and capabilities (Konopka, 2012). A significant manifestation of the improvement of this formation is the process of qualitative changes due to the external influence on Poland and the connection of national plans with the NATO and European Union planning cycle. One of the milestones of this process was 2012 when the National Strategic Review was conducted. It resulted in five retrofitting programs concerning (Gocuł, 2012):

- modern air defence systems, including anti-missile defence,
- systems to increase mobility and firepower through the introduction of helicopters in all types of armed forces,
- the Navy and its adjustment to the tasks carried out in the Baltic Sea and sea areas during the expeditionary tasks,
- command and reconnaissance systems, including IT development and robotisation within C4ISR,
- development of a complementary family of unmanned reconnaissance measures.

Another important change from an internal perspective is the internal identity of the army. It is connected with a change in the social perception of the role of a soldier, "from the slogan "from conscription," associated with coercion, reluctance, passivity, stagnation, to the slogan – "voluntary," bringing about the notions of voluntariness, initiative, creativity and commitment" (Gocuł, 2012). This reflects the paradigm that public sector organizations can maintain a motivated and satisfied staff despite its bureaucratic nature. The role of leadership (Shamir, 2020) is particularly important here and should be consistent with public values in a repressive/constrained professional environment (Hattke and Znanewitz and Vogel, 2017).

Justifying the Polish Armed Forces' interest from the perspective of the implementation of the concept, one should emphasize the above-mentioned changes and the special role of the army in society from the sociological perspective. This interest also manifests itself in the questions that researchers ask themselves in connection with the use of the NPM concept in the army, namely: what are the consequences of introducing new management principles on the dynamics of defense organizations and what influence do they have on relations between the army and the external environment? New requirements are a challenge to how defense organizations are constructed, including both the flow of information and the perspective of commanding a military organization (Norheim-Martinsen, 2016). As Marcinkowski emphasizes, the evolution of military doctrines reverses the military's role as an entity called to military violence in conflict resolution – related only to responsibility during the war. The military has a primarily defensive role, "limiting its activity to providing the necessary level of security to its own state and its citizens" (Marcinkowski, 2014). In this sense, the military's service to the homeland consists of ensuring the sovereign existence of the homeland in times of armed conflict and perpetuating peace by contributing to ensuring a sense of security in citizens' daily lives.

2. Pro-Customer Perspective of the Polish Armed Forces: Methodological Assumptions of the Research

According to the legal conditions, the Polish Armed Forces' role in the state's internal security system is auxiliary and supportive. This means that the army's use is possible when other forces and means are insufficient or exhausted. To determine the army's service in a citizen's everyday life, one can use the Need-Feature-Benefit (NFB) rule, used in direct sales. According to this rule, the citizen's need is to feel safe. On this basis, the characteristics of the army necessary to meet this need are determined, which at the end, are turned into concrete benefits for the citizen. The characteristics of particular elements of the PCK have been presented in Table 1, which brings closer the essence of the army's operation from the perspective of its functionality for the citizen.

Understanding how a citizen perceives the service offered by the military is the main focus of this study. Business organizations use customer satisfaction analysis to perform this type of task to confirm the high quality of products and services offered. Also, in public organizations, customer/citizen satisfaction surveys are increasingly used, both at the municipal and communal offices and marshal offices. The analysis of sample surveys carried out by Pukas shows that "all of them have the character of assessing the level of satisfaction of external customers – individual or institutional (other offices or entrepreneurs)" (Pukas, 2015). The military as an organization is also subject to citizen evaluation, which is carried out using surveys with the use of questionnaires and interviews by entities established for this purpose, such as The Social Opinion Research Centre or the Military Centre for Citizenship Education (in particular the Military Office for Social Research). The most frequently conducted

surveys concern getting to know the respondents' opinions about the preparation of the army for specific activities in the external perspective, i.e., defining defense capabilities in the situation of armed conflicts and the internal perspective related to supporting the population in the situation of threat to life and health caused by the occurrence of disasters (Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, 2014; Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, 2017).

Table 1. *The perspective of functionality of the service of the Polish Armed Forces for the citizen/client*

Need	Feature	Benefit
internal security and the guarantee of assistance to the society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal potential, • structured organisational structure, • discipline, • the ability to mobilise, to build up strength, • availability, • military infrastructure, • an integral control system, • an autonomous logistics system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participating in a wide range of different tasks in assisting civil authorities and the public, • the possibility of regrouping forces and resources to any place where a crisis situation occurs in a relatively short period of time – conducting operations using mobile means, • adjusting the size of the forces and measures used to the type, intensity and scale of the internal and external security threat.

Source: Own study based on: Falecki, 2018; Konopka, 2012.

In the source literature, one can find the results of the research concerning the general evaluation of the presence of military units on the territory of communes and the evaluation of relations between the army and local communities (Sirko and Piotrowska-Trybull, 2018; Sirko, Kozuba and Piotrowska-Trybull, 2019; Paloyo, Vance, and Vorell, 2020; Andersson and Lundberg, n.d.). However, among the studies conducted so far, no such ones have been found which would relate to combining the perspective of the perceived level of security with the evaluation of specific services provided by the military for the benefit of the population understood as a portfolio of implemented activities and the values held by the military. In this article, the following are considered as portfolios of activities:

1. Implementation of notifications by sappers (ordinance disposal patrols) in the framework of emergency clearance of areas from explosive and dangerous objects.
2. Support to civil services in search and rescue operations or protection of human health and life.
3. Assistance provided by seafarers to survivors and victims on the Polish Baltic Sea waters.
4. Supporting clinics and institutes of cardiology and transplantology in air transport for medical crews and organs transported.

5. Donation of blood by soldiers and students at military universities and civilian employees of the army.
6. Using the army for crisis management tasks and support of civilians in emergency situations (<https://www.wojsko-polskie.pl/tacy-jestesmy/>).

Due to a different understanding of the notion of values based on different sciences, Misztal (1999) has ordered how it is comprehended, indicating that values are treated as:

- phenomena, facts, sensations, as well as mental experiences (...),
- positive attitudes towards the expected target states (...),
- evaluation criteria, beliefs about what is desirable, how it should or should not be done,
- the characteristics of objects and their ability to meet human needs. Moreover, ideas, symbolic cultural elements,
- all that is positively evaluated, what is preferred, what is the subject of aspirations and desires (Morawski, 2011).

For the research carried out, the distinguishing features of the army – a public organization in the service of the society, are such as:

1. Patriotism – an attitude of love for the homeland, bearing the traits of sacrificial love, ready for the highest sacrifice, often for heroic deeds;
2. Solidarity – striving for the common good, recognising the common good and fighting for it, but not against the other person, but fighting for the other person;
3. Justice - respect for the rights of the other person and of individual communities to certain personal and material and material goods;
4. Love in human relations – its essence is expressed in selfless respect for the value of every human being;
5. Valour – not giving in to fear, control over this common human feeling, not giving up on action, and (for the right reasons) risking one's life;
6. Conscientiousness – the precise performance of specific tasks of the profession, personal commitment and even generosity;
7. Perseverance – overcoming inconvenience and the ability to last to the end of the task entrusted (Marcinkowski, 2014).

It was also assumed that the sense of security is manifested in assessing the security of the place where the citizen/customer lives. When preparing the study, the fact that the sense of security of citizens in particular locations may be affected by the military unit's location was taken into consideration. This has to do with the potential impact of the military on local development (Leigh, Blakely, 2016; Berman, 2019), especially in the following perspectives (Piotrowska-Trybull, 2013):

- economic, by creating jobs, reporting demand for products and services, and providing income,

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- competence, through high professional competence of soldiers and military employees, which translates into the level of local human capital,
 - social, through readiness to help in situations of threat to life and health and readiness to cooperate, strengthening social capital based on trust and reciprocity standards,
 - infrastructural, by participating in the creation of municipal infrastructure, e.g. roads, bridges,
 - institutional – support for local authorities in the area of shaping patriotic attitudes, educating youth and respect for tradition.

Given the above, it was assumed that the research would cover both the cities where the military unit is stationed and those cities which do not have a unit on their territory, although it had been located on their territory in the past.

3. The Sense of Citizen's Safety in the Light of the Declared Offer of the Polish Armed Forces – Results of the Research

The results presented in this paper are part of the research material obtained during the implementation of the research work entitled Security Attributes of Administrative Security Management Bodies in the Perspective of Local Communities. The survey conducted in November and December 2019 involved 600 respondents from 6 cities (100 respondents from each city), broken down by: cities with a military unit – Siedlce (Mazowieckie), Zamość (Podkarpackie), Zgierz (Łódzkie); cities without a military unit – Ostrów Wielkopolski (Wielkopolska), Włocławek (Kujawsko-Pomorskie), Piła (Wielkopolska)³.

The research was carried out using a mix-mode research procedure (Sztabiński and Żmijewska-Jędrzejczyk, 2012) using CATI (Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing) and CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interview). In the CATI technique, the examination was conducted by 10 pollers and was carried out using the CADAS system (used for data collection). The interviews were conducted at a convenient time for the respondent. The survey was controlled following the quality standards for market and public opinion polling in the field (PKJPA, The Pollers Quality Control Program).

The authors commissioned the survey to ASM. The authors prepared questions that were asked to the respondents. Two measurement scales were used to construct the questions: nominal and sequential. The analyses were carried out with the use of IBM SPSS Statistics 26.0. To determine the relationship between the security condition's assessment in a town inhabited by the respondents and the assessment of activities and values provided by the military, rho Spearman correlation analysis was conducted. Further on, correlation coefficients were compared between people who

³ In cities without a military unit, where the 2019 residents were surveyed, the military had previously been stationed.

live in a city with a military base and people who live in a city without a military base. The significance level was assumed to be at $\alpha = 0.05$. For the research analysis, the safety assessment scale was reversed, where 1 meant very low, and 5 meant very high.

4. Relationships between the Assessment of the Security Status of a Place of Residence and the Assessment of the Implementation of Measures

In the first step, analyses were carried out to check the relationship between the state of security in the place where the respondent lives and the assessment of the implement. The results of the analyses are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Spearman correlation coefficients (r_s) for the relationship between the assessment of the security condition in the place where the respondent lives and the military operations assessment

Activities	assessment of the safety condition in the respondent's place of residence	
	r_s	p
Implementation of notifications by sappers (ordinance disposal patrols) in the framework of emergency clearance of areas from explosive and dangerous objects.	0.07	0.082
Support to civil services in search and rescue operations or protection of human health and life.	0.03	0.415
Assistance provided by seafarers to survivors and victims on the Polish Baltic Sea waters.	0.04	0.302
Support of clinics and institutes of cardiology and transplantology in air transport for medical crews and organs transported.	0.07	0.095
Blood donations by soldiers and students of military universities and civilian employees of the army.	0.05	0.268
Use of the army for crisis management tasks and support of civilians in emergency situations.	0.03	0.473

Source: Own study.

The analysis did not show any significant correlation between assessing the security situation in the town where the respondent lives and the military operations assessment. Additionally, analogous analyses were carried out among respondents living in a town with and without a military base. The results of the analyses are presented in Table 3.

The analysis did not reveal any significant differences among the groups regarding the relationship between the security assessment and military operations assessment. Both among people living in a town with a military unit/base and in a town without a military base, the relationship between the security assessment and the assessment of operations proved insignificant.

Table 3. Spearman's correlation coefficients (r_s) together with the Fisher's Z test for the relationship between the assessment of the state of security and the assessment of operations by the armed forces among the respondents living in towns with and without a military base

Activities		No army	Military	Z	p
Implementation of notifications by sappers (ordinance disposal patrols) in the framework of emergency clearance of areas from explosive and dangerous objects.	r_s	-0.07	-0.07	<0.01	1.000
	p	0.223	0.225		
Support to civil services in search and rescue operations or protection of human health and life.	r_s	0.02	-0.08	1.21	0.228
	p	0.747	0.167		
Assistance provided by seafarers to survivors and victims on the Polish Baltic Sea waters.	r_s	-0.01	-0.07	0.69	0.488
	p	0.846	0.241		
Support of clinics and institutes of cardiology and transplantology in air transport for medical crews and organs transported.	r_s	-0.05	-0.09	0.52	0.602
	p	0.431	0.128		
Blood donations by soldiers and students of military universities and civilian employees of the army.	r_s	-0.01	-0.08	0.87	0.385
	p	0.883	0.170		
Use of the army for crisis management tasks and support of civilians in emergency situations	r_s	-0.04	-0.02	-0.22	0.822
	p	0.521	0.747		

Source: Own study.

To some extent, it can be assumed that the respondents, when evaluating actions carried out by military units, distinguished between categories of security: internal – based on the protection of the constitutional order and observance of public order, and external – based on the international situation. The situation could also influence the respondents' security assessment in their residence in the international and national environment. The stable situation in the environment affects the sense of security of the inhabitants and determines their daily existence. The lack of threats in the place of residence, work, and education has a positive impact on individuals' mental condition and increases their quality of life. The fact that there is no interdependence between the above-mentioned variables may indicate that the respondents did not relate the activities carried out by the army and their effects, which are addressed to the general public, to the local community. In the period of peace, the respondents focus more on those elements that are closer to them, creating their living environment instead of the time of conflict or war.

5. Relationships between the Assessment of the Security Status of a Place of Residence and the Assessment of Values Vested the Armed Forces

In the next step, the relationship between the assessment of the security situation in the place of residence and the values of the military in ensuring security for citizens was checked. The results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Spearman correlation coefficients (r_s) for the relationship between the security assessment and the value assessment

Values	Safety assessment in the respondent's place of residence	
	r_s	p
Patriotism	0.05	0.188
Solidarity	0.10	0.011
Justice	0.09	0.024
Love in human relations	0.07	0.099
Courage	0.10	0.012
Conscientiousness	0.09	0.025
Perseverance	0.10	0.018

Source: Own study.

The analysis showed a positive correlation between security assessment in the respondent's place of residence and the assessment of values such as solidarity, justice, fortitude, conscientiousness, and perseverance. All these relationships were at a weak level. The results obtained mean that the higher the respondents assessed values such as solidarity, justice, bravery, conscientiousness, and perseverance in providing security, the higher was their assessment of security in residence.

Analyses of the relationship between the assessment of safety in residence and the assessment of values in the provision of such safety were conducted among the respondents living in towns with and without a military unit. Then, both correlation coefficients were compared with the Fisher test. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Spearman's correlation coefficients (r_s) together with the Fisher's Z test for the relation between the assessment of the state of security in the place of residence and the assessment of values in providing this security for citizens among the respondents living in towns with and without a military base

Values		No army	Army	Z	p
Patriotism	r_s	0.14	-0.04	-2.18	0.029
	p	0.016	0.501		
Solidarity	r_s	0.16	0.04	-1.46	0.143
	p	0.005	0.471		
Justice	r_s	0.16	0.02	-1.74	0.082
	p	0.005	0.724		
Love in human relations	r_s	0.13	0.01	-1.49	0.135
	p	0.027	0.927		
Courage	r_s	0.11	0.09	-0.21	0.831
	p	0.058	0.112		
Conscientiousness	r_s	0.14	0.04	-1.13	0.261
	p	0.019	0.447		
Perseverance	r_s	0.15	0.04	-1.26	0.208
	p	0.012	0.461		

Source: Own study.

The analysis showed significant differences between people living in the towns on the territory of which the military unit is stationed and in the towns without a unit in terms of patriotism as a value promoted by the military to ensure citizens' security. In the case of respondents living in towns without a military base, the relationship between the assessment of patriotism in ensuring the safety of citizens and the assessment of the state of security in that town is weak and positive, which means that the higher the assessment of patriotism, the higher the assessment of security. Among the respondents living in the towns where the military base is located, the relationship between patriotism and the state of security proved to be irrelevant. For the remaining relationships, the differences between the groups proved to be irrelevant.

Among the respondents living in towns without a military base, there were weak and positive relations between security assessment and patriotism, solidarity, justice, love in human relations, conscientiousness, and perseverance. This means that the higher these values were evaluated, the higher the security assessment was. Among the respondents who lived in towns with a military base, the relationship between the values and the state of security assessment turned out to be irrelevant.

6. Conclusions

In providing a service to a society consisting of ensuring security, the armed forces focus externally on counteracting aggression, maintaining peace, and guaranteeing the state's power. Internally, the armed forces focus on protecting public order and helping civil authorities and society in disasters. Citizens assess the service offered by the military. This assessment varies according to the extent to which it meets citizens' needs, the benefits it provides, and the conditions of the environment. The evaluation of the public service provided by the armed forces is, to a certain extent, specific due to the fact that they engage in cooperation with other entities while delivering it. By cooperating with other entities, the armed forces, thanks to efficient and professional activities based on values, build trust in the army's institutions, strengthen respect for those who perform this profession, and influence the values and attitudes of citizens. In the local environment, such activities foster greater interest and involvement of citizens in state defense matters and support society's defense education (Decision No. 187/ MON of 9.06.2009).

In the conducted research, the evaluation of activities carried out by the military in the context of the security assessment in the place of residence did not indicate the existence of any dependencies between them. This may be since some of the actions mentioned above are only available to these particular towns' inhabitants through media coverage. The actions concerned matters that did not occur locally and were therefore difficult to assess from the security of the place of residence. In various periods, an exception is actions aimed at supporting civilians in emergencies and clearing the area of explosives and dangerous materials.

Thus, this may indicate that the respondents are more oriented towards thinking about the armed forces from an external perspective and services provided to the general public rather than locally oriented services. Nevertheless, other perspectives present in the source literature, such as the perspective of local development, make it possible to showcase the army's presence in a given location and its impact on the socio-economic situation in those places. Another difficulty in assessing the effects of military activity may also be time and the availability of information for residents about the tasks carried out by the soldiers. The evaluation of activities consisting, for example, in the interventional clearing of explosive and dangerous objects from the areas which in the future will be used by the inhabitants for housing or investment purposes, requires a relatively long time of carrying out these works, incurring necessary expenditures by local governments, as well as informing the public about these activities.

The direction of thinking about military activities in the external perspective and services for the general public is reflected in the CBOS (Public Opinion Research Center) survey on public trust (Omyła-Rudzka, 2016) for public institutions. The military in the years 2002-2016 enjoyed a relatively high level of public trust – over 70% of respondents trusted this institution.

In turn, in the long run, the evaluation of the service provided by the military may be related, among other things, to the dissemination of positive patterns of soldiers' actions based on values, which may foster a change in social attitudes and behaviors (Piotrowska-Trybull, 2016), shifting towards more solidarity, perseverance, conscientiousness, and love for other people. If they are truly respected and not merely declared, the values that guide soldiers in their daily work can become a certain inspiration for others. In the research carried out, the evaluation of the values carried out by the military in the course of the security service in conjunction with the evaluation of security in the place of residence indicated the existence of weak dependencies, especially in those cities where the military is currently not stationed.

In these cities, the importance of the values of the military for security was more often stressed. In the 1990s, military units functioned in these cities, being their distinguishing feature concerning other places, and playing a specific role in economic life. Therefore, the years of coexistence of the army with the local community could have impacted the assessment of the army's activities in terms of the values it should serve and which determine the quality of service provided by the army. The perception of the relationship between values understood as: positive attitudes towards expected target states, characteristics of people and objects, and their ability to meet human needs, ideas, and security assessment indicate the importance of cultural elements in individual and social development.

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